

**MINUTES  
OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
EDINA CITY COUNCIL  
HELD AT CITY HALL  
AUGUST 16, 2005  
5:00 P.M.**

ROLLCALL Answering rollcall were Members Housh, Masica and Swenson and Mayor Hovland.

Manager Hughes gave an overview of the 2006 budget and the significant changes from the 2005 budget.

Member Masica asked if it would be appropriate to discuss Council salaries at the meeting. Manager Hughes said it would be appropriate to discuss if time allowed after the public hearing.

Member Masica noted that absentee voting is costly and suggested that absentee voting might be increasing because it is more of a convenience than a necessity. Manager Hughes said he could not comment on the matter, but could get more information for the Council at a future meeting. Member Housh said that if absentee voting increases voter participation, it is money well spent.

Member Housh encouraged staff to leverage vendor relationships to the enterprise funds to reduce costs.

Mayor Hovland asked for more information about the City's contributions to PERA.

Joni Kelly Bennett, Lynn Ave., reported that the Transportation Commission at a special meeting Aug. 11 voted to recommend to the Council \$50,000 be spent for a study of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. The Commission ranked the area around Edina High School as its top priority, followed by West 70<sup>th</sup> Street and northeast Edina. Because studies of the area around Edina High School and northeast Edina were currently being studied, the Commission believes money should be spent to study West 70<sup>th</sup> Street in 2006.

Wayne Prochniak, 5912 Dewey Hill Road, Chairman of Human Rights & Relations Commission, presented the group's recommendations to fund nine agencies and a one-time \$1,000 grant to the Edina A Better Chance Foundation. The nine agencies to be funded were Senior Community Services (\$26,200), Cornerstone (\$15,000), Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (\$16,800), Women in Transition (\$4,600), Minneapolis Mediation Program (\$5,000), Ministry for Healing and Wholeness (\$5,400), The Bridge (\$2,200), Store to Door (\$3,100) and Neighborhood Partnerships (\$4,600).

Neighborhood Partnerships is a program that has not received funding in the past. Neighborhood Partnerships provides home living assistance to elderly and disabled persons, following Normandale Center's Care Team model. Neighborhood Partnerships was the

recipient of a State grant to link agencies within Edina to further demonstrate the value and effectiveness of supportive services for the health of seniors.

Allocations of \$141,130 represent a 2 percent increase in funding.

The HRRC recommendation also includes an allocation of \$23,191 to the RPC to complete the work of the Affordable Housing Task Force. Council members asked for an update on the work of the task force. Prochniak admitted that there is not a lot to show for the study to date, as the original consultant hired to do the project had been terminated.

Manager Hughes expressed concern with the Commission's recommendation to give a grant to the ABC Foundation, as the City is prohibited from making gifts. The grant recommendation will be reviewed by the City Attorney.

The Council asked why \$75,000 had been budgeted for an additional building inspector. Manager Hughes explained that the number of building permits is not decreasing on an annual basis, but continues to remain steady. In order to maintain a good level of customer service, it is necessary to add additional staff.

The Council discussed its salaries. Member Housh indicated that he would like to see the mayor's salary increased (with no increase for Council members) OR see Council salaries eliminated altogether since he does not feel people run for Council for the money. Member Swenson said she feels salaries should be increased because some people who were qualified might not be able to afford the duties associated with being a member of the Council (lunches, memberships, campaigns) without those funds.

Member Masica asked for an explanation of the Central Services budget.

Member Masica asked if the increase in asphalt was related to the increase in oil prices. Director Houle explained that the increase is due to both oil prices and \$65,000 for additional street maintenance.

Member Masica asked why there is a projected increase in the cost of salt. Director Houle said that the Public Works Department anticipates the need for more salt than has been used in the past.

Member Masica asked if the City pays NSP rent to locate street lights on the electric company's poles. Director Houle responded in the affirmative.

Member Masica asked how the property owners at 50<sup>th</sup> & France were assessed for maintenance. Manager Hughes explained that property owners in the downtown area were directly assessed for the costs.

Member Masica asked if overtime costs have decreased because of the opening of the South Metro Public Safety Training Center. Chief Siitari said he does not believe that the Training Center has yet decreased overtime costs.

Mayor Hovland asked if the proposed part-time staff is necessary because of additional state or federal reporting requirements. Chief Siitari said that most statements must now be transcribed. In the past two years, the number of pages transcribed by the Department has doubled.

Member Masica asked if fire prevention education directly results in a reduction in fire calls. Chief Scheerer said he has seen a 2 percent reduction in fire calls since additional educational programs were put into place.

Member Masica asked if the Fire Department has enjoyed an overtime savings with the opening of the South Metro Public Safety Training Center. Chief Scheerer said he has seen a reduction and believes there has been some savings as a result of the center.

Mayor Hovland asked Chief Siitari to comment on the civil defense and animal control budget increases. Chief Siitari explained that the civil defense increases were a result of an accounting increase and the animal control budget has increased as a result of a step increase in the animal control officer's salary.

Member Housh asked how many ice rinks were maintained under the budget. Director Keprios said 11 outdoor rinks were maintained.

Member Masica asked if the Senior Center is self-sufficient. Director Keprios said it is not yet self-sufficient, but said additional revenues in building rentals and programs were helping to close the gap.

Member Swenson reminded the Council that the Park Maintenance Department is operating with one less person than it has in the past. Mayor Hovland asked if the Department has considered establishing a senior volunteer corps to help with park maintenance activities. Director Keprios said he has not, mostly because of safety concerns. However, the City has an Adopt-A-Park program that assists with park clean-up, alleviating some stress on the department.

Member Masica asked how much of the contingency budget was used last year. Manager Hughes said \$91,000 was used in 2004 and said a lot would be used in 2005 because funds will be used for a transportation study.

Member Masica asked how much riders were charged for the Dial-A-Ride program. Manager Hughes said riders were charged \$2 per ride, per way.

Member Masica asked how many deer were eliminated each year during the deer management program. Manager Hughes said approximately 30 deer were removed each fall or winter. The exact number is determined by air surveys.

There being no further business on the Council Agenda, Mayor Hovland declared the meeting adjourned at 6:47 P.M.

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Assistant City Manager